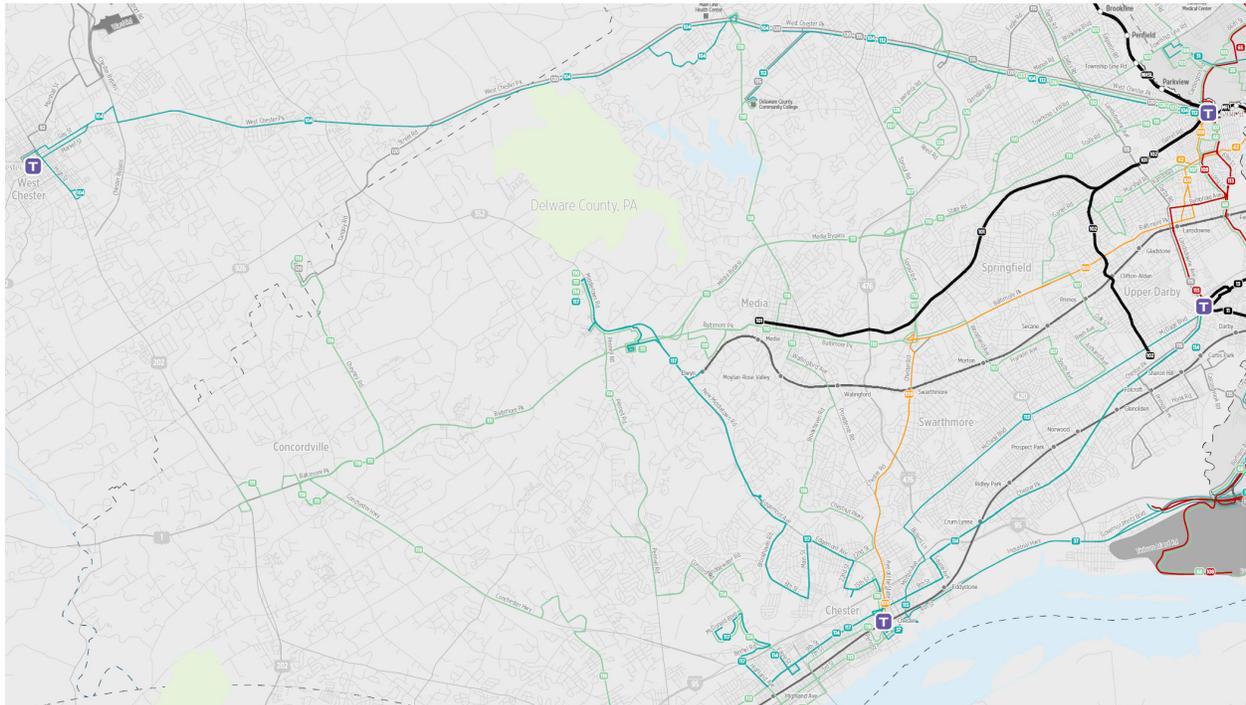


# 69<sup>TH</sup> STREET TRANSPORTATION CENTER AND DELAWARE COUNTY

*Routes: 37, 68, 104, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 118, 119, 120, 126*

Eastern Delaware County (Delco) from Upper Darby in the north to Chester in the south is very urban and densely populated, similar to some City of Philadelphia neighborhoods. These areas generate strong demand for transit and can support very frequent transit service. The western part of Delco is more suburban with lower density. SEPTA bus service in Delaware County is complemented by several trolley routes and three Regional Rail routes.

## SEPTA Routes Serving 69<sup>th</sup> Street Transportation Center and Delaware County



## NETWORK DESIGN

**The bus routes are oriented to major hubs.** Eleven of the 17 routes serve 69<sup>th</sup> Street Transportation Center, while seven routes serve Chester Transportation Center. Other hubs include Darby Transportation Center and the Airport, and all of these have connections to rail service. Many bus routes serve multiple hubs.

**Many routes are very long.** Eleven of these routes exceed 15 miles in each direction, and five routes have alignments greater than 20 miles. Some routes have short-turn patterns to increase frequency on the higher-ridership segments.

**The network serves most major corridors.** Service is provided on the primary retail and employment corridors including West Chester Pike, Baltimore Pike, Chester Pike, and MacDade Boulevard, but the network does not serve all of the residential areas in the county. Some corridors, such as Baltimore Pike, are served by different routes on different segments.

**There are gaps in north-south service.** Between Lansdowne Avenue and Sproul Road, there are no routes providing through service in the north-south direction. Service is instead oriented east-west in order to provide connections at 69<sup>th</sup> Street Transportation Center

## MAJOR FINDINGS

**Service is complicated.** These 17 routes average more than eight patterns each, including some short-turn patterns as well as deviations to serve destinations away from major roads where the pedestrian environment is inadequate.

**End-of-line constraints impact service.** Both Chester and the Airport are relatively distant from SEPTA bus depots which increases costs for starting and ending service at those locations. Finding a suitable layover location at the Airport is another challenge. Other routes have their end-of-line on private property, such as at Penn State-Brandywine or Delaware County Community College, and these are vulnerable to changes from the site owners.

**Some bus service is duplicative.** West Chester Pike has five routes serving the eastern segment. There is also duplicative service along State Road and between the Eastwick neighborhood and the Airport.

**Some routes travel a circuitous path.** Route 107 is an extreme example of a circuitous alignment, but parts of the alignment for Routes 108, 114, 115, 117, and 126 are more indirect than would be optimal. In addition, service around the Airport is very circuitous.

## OPPORTUNITIES

The following opportunities focus on how to improve the SEPTA bus network in Delaware County. Opportunities for individual routes are included in each route evaluation.

**Create Service Grid in Eastern Delco:** While the area does not have the regular street grid as in Philadelphia, the density of eastern Delaware County can support a bus network grid. Adding north-south service will improve connections with the Airport, serve more major corridors, facilitate transfers and enable reduced duplication particularly in and out of 69<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Provide Frequent Service with a Single Route on West Chester Pike:** A single route providing frequent service between Newtown Square and 69<sup>th</sup> Street would facilitate transfers and allow the elimination of the existing duplicative service provided by multiple routes. This corridor would also be a good candidate for bus priority measures, as noted in prior studies.

**Use Microtransit to Serve Lower-Demand Areas and Reduce Deviations:** Keeping the fixed routes on a more direct alignment using main streets enables more reliable and frequent service. Improvements in technology now enable on-demand microtransit to serve many origins and destinations which are away from main roads and in a poor pedestrian environment.

**Simplify Service:** Splitting some long routes at logical places with high turnover, such as Chester Transportation Center, would enable elimination of some short-turn patterns. Other patterns could be eliminated through the use of microtransit, as noted above, or by asking customers to walk to nearby service – for example, Route 126 turns from West Chester Pike to serve Darby Road and North Manoa Road, a deviation from an important transit corridor that makes service more complex.

**Restructure Airport Service:** A frequent airport circulator(s) would allow a reduction in duplicative and circuitous service of several SEPTA routes around the terminals and some nearby employment centers such as UPS. Service duplication between the airport and the Eastwick neighborhood should also be reduced. A suitable end-of-line near the airport would enable more routes to start and end there.

**Operate More Frequent Service on Fewer Corridors in Chester:** Using 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets for all service in Chester would create corridors with more frequent service while still maintaining reasonable walking distances.

**Streamline Service:** Making service more direct improves reliability and enables greater frequency. Several routes—especially those serving lower demand areas in Chester, Folcroft, Morton, and Lawrence Park—have opportunities to straighten the alignment while maintaining coverage of the service area.

**Implement Bus Priority Measures:** In addition to West Chester Pike, corridors such as 69<sup>th</sup> Street/Church Lane, Baltimore Pike, MacDade Boulevard, and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets in Chester could facilitate better bus service with queue jump lanes, signal priority, curb extensions for bus stops or even dedicated bus lanes. Collaboration with the various municipalities and possibly Delaware County would be needed.